

Conyers gives up Judiciary position

Influential lawmaker facing allegations of sexual harassment

By Hope Yen Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Michigan Rep. John Conyers, under investigation over allegations he sexually harassed female staff members, said Sunday he will step aside as the top Democrat on the House Judiciary Committee while fiercely denying he acted inappropriately during his long tenure in Congress.

In a statement, the 88-year-old lawmaker made clear he would prefer to keep his leadership role on the committee, which has wide jurisdiction over U.S. law enforcement, from civil rights and impeachment of federal officials to sexual harassment protections.

But Mr. Conyers acknowledged maintaining the post would be a distraction “in light of the attention drawn by recent allegations made against me.”

“I have come to believe that my presence as ranking member on the committee would not serve these efforts while the Ethics Committee investigation is pending,” he said. “I cannot in good conscience allow these charges to undermine my colleagues in the Democratic Caucus, and my friends on both sides of the aisle in the Judiciary Committee and the House of Representatives.”

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Alex Brandon/Associated Press

Rep. John Conyers, D-Mich., said maintaining his post as the top Democrat on the House Judiciary Committee would be a distraction.

Warehouses get smart to meet demand for instant delivery

By Courtney Linder Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

First in a series on the growth of on-demand retail delivery.

Inside a lab that resembles a trailer, a few feet from a railroad track in Sewickley, startup company IAM Robotics believes it has a solution for the e-commerce industry — something that looks like a circus animal.

With what appears to be a long, pearl-colored trunk, a robot named Swift reaches toward a demo shelf and sucks a tube of toothpaste into its vacuum-powered robotic arm. Then, the robot rotates its limb 90 degrees to the right to plop the package into a bin.

In an era of hand-picked clothing shipped to your door, meal kits dropped off on the stoop, and a hunger for instant gratification as soon as consumers click “order,” there’s a new-age demand for deliveries to show up yesterday. Rushing orders to the customer quickly is no longer an option, but a mandate.

And a new generation of businesses — from Pittsburgh-grown

SEE DELIVERY, PAGE A-2

STEELERS ALUMNI ON HAND



Matt Freed/Post-Gazette

Former Steelers, from left, Mel Blount, Lynn Swann, Andy Russell and Joe Greene watch the unveiling of the Steelers Hall of Honor on Sunday at Heinz Field before Sunday’s game against the Packers. Story on C-1.

Long overlooked, Uptown hopes boom times have arrived at last

Hospital, housing development are improving outlook

By Diana Nelson Jones Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Sam Kamouh began piling corned beef on rye in Uptown in 1982, when Pittsburgh’s unemployment was spiking at 13.9 percent. He and his aunt started the business that’s now on Fifth Avenue.

He weathered the economic fallout year after year, asking “Yes?” every few seconds to prompt the next customer’s order, his hands flying like little wings from bread to meat to condiment. When the streets hollowed out and buildings were leveled for parking lots, he lost grocery customers but people still lined up for sandwiches at Sam’s Market.

His business is one constant in a neighborhood that always seems to be in flux. For the past decade, Uptown has expected to start happening any year now. Each new investment, each new attraction has been a bread crumb suggesting the way forward.

For many investors, the tim-



Darrell Sapp/Post-Gazette

Marco Merante holds a sub sandwich in Merante & Sons Nov. 10 on Marion Street in Uptown. Pasquale Merante, Marco’s father, reopened the family store last month after 17 years.

UPMC Mercy’s plan to build a roughly 8-acre specialty vision and rehabilitation research hospital — a collaboration with The Vision Center in Paris — is expected to change that dynamic. And once Port Authority’s bus rapid transit is funded, the scales should tip for Uptown to enter the ‘20s roaring.

ing has been perfect.

City’s Edge, a nine-story, \$47 million multi-use property with mixed-income housing, was already being planned when UPMC announced its expansion. City’s Edge is expected to break ground early next year beside the new NRG Energy Plant,

SEE UPTOWN, PAGE A-3

High court to determine if rap song is art or threat

By Paula Reed Ward Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

The lyrics talked about Glocks and bullets and knowing where two specific police officers slept.

It referenced the Stanton Heights man convicted of killing three Pittsburgh police officers in 2009.

It included the words: “Let’s kill these cops ‘cause they don’t do us no good.”

Now, the state Supreme Court must decide if that rap song is protected free speech under the First Amendment or if it constituted a “true threat” that properly resulted in a criminal conviction for terroristic threats and witness intimidation.

The case, brought by Jamal Knox, one of two men who wrote and performed the song, will be argued before Pennsylvania’s highest court on Tuesday in Harrisburg.

Depending on the court’s ruling, there is potential the case could ultimately end up before the U.S. Supreme Court.

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Marine leading Pittsburgh Toys for Tots on personal mission

By Kris B. Mamula Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

He and his older brother were raised by a single mom, a factory worker who was furloughed when things got slow.

The family lived in government subsidized housing in the Manhattan borough of New York City, so paying bills while caring for young children made for some tough household budget decisions. For these reasons, Marine Corps First Sgt. Jason Polanco said he understands what it means for a child to be underprivileged.

The 35-year-old Sgt. Polanco is heading up this year’s U.S. Marine Corps Toys for Tots drive in the Pittsburgh area.

“I can identify where the families are coming from,” Sgt. Polanco said. “I understand that the kids can’t get everything they want for Christmas.”

Toys for Tots, which was



founded in 1947, is an international organization dedicated to making the holidays a little brighter for needy kids by making sure they have some new toys Christmas morning. Toy distribution is scheduled for 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Dec. 15-16 at the former Sam’s Club, 2930 Lebanon Church Road in West Mifflin.

Last year, 128,000 toys were distributed through Toys for Tots in

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Darrell Sapp/Post-Gazette

U.S. Marine First Sgt. Jason Polanco unloads a van full of items at the Toys for Tots warehouse Nov. 20 in West Mifflin.

Weather

Mild with plenty of sun. Daytime high 49, tonight’s low 37. Page A-16

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